

THE  
SABBATH SCHOOL REPOSITORY,  
AND  
Teacher's Assistant.

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"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME, AND FORBID THEM NOT."

No. 2.

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VOL. I.

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HISTORY OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

(Continued from page 4.)

The next important era in the history of Sabbath Schools was formed by the facilities afforded to the business of instruction, by Dr. Bell, and Mr. Lancaster.

Sabbath Schools were now universal in England, *union* only was necessary to give the system the highest efficiency. And at a public meeting holden in London July 13th, 1803 a Sunday School Union was formed. The objects and regulations of this union were excellent, and its operations vigorous and extensive. After this example Unions were soon formed in different parts of the kingdom, effecting the most happy results.

In Scotland the good cause soon prevailed and flourished, and societies were formed in all parts of the country.

"Wales at a very early period in the history of Sunday Schools, entered with eagerness into the scheme, and adorned her romantic and picturesque valleys with numerous asylums for the instruction of the poor. And here it is but justice, to the Sunday School Institution, to assert its claims to the high honour of giving birth to the most noble and efficient Society ever formed by man, or blessed by God, for promoting the interests of genuine Christianity. Every reader will anticipate the name of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The honour of giving rise to this mighty combination of wealth, of zeal, and talents, is better worth

contending for, than the highest place in the roll of monarchs, conquerers, or philosophers.

“ By means of Sunday School education in Wales, the number of readers increased far beyond the supply of Welsh Bibles to be obtained. This induced the indefatigable Mr. Charles of Bala, to undertake a journey to London, for the purpose of soliciting a private subscription from his friends, to defray the expence of printing an edition of Welsh Bibles. In the course of conversation on this subject, at a committee meeting of the Religious Tract Society, a thought came into the mind of the Rev. Joseph Hughes, a thought which darted as one of the brightest beams from the fountain of light and life above, and for which millions will have reason to bless his name, that a little more exertion than was requisite for supplying Wales with the Scriptures, might found an institution which should go on increasing its funds, and extending its operations, till not only the British dominions, but the whole world should be furnished with the word of God. Such was the origin of a Society which is the glory of our age. I need not trace it further than just to say that the plan was warmly embraced by the gentleman present, and steps were immediately taken to give it efficiency. My object in adverting to this Society was to show its pedigree, and to claim it as the offspring of the Sunday School Institution. The cause which originated still supports it ; for in most cases a Sunday School Teacher must be the forerunner of a bible.”

So great was the progress of Sunday Schools in Wales, that in three years 177 schools were established, containing more than 8,000 children.

The Sunday School System was introduced into Ireland in 1793 ; its progress however was not rapid until the formation of the Hibernian Sunday School Society in Dublin 1809. In April 1815 there were upwards of 252 schools containing more than 25,000 children. Since that time the number has greatly increased.

In the West India Islands, in the Island of Cape Breton, in Nova Scotia, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in all parts of the British dominions the blessed system is extended.

In 1811 a very noble improvement was made by the zealous exertions of Mr. Charles of Wales. He first introdu-

ced the plan of having separate schools for adults. The success was great, so that in one county, the adult poor, and even the aged flocked in such numbers to Sunday Schools, that the Shop-keepers could not immediately supply them with an adequate number of spectacles. The benefits conferred upon thousands by this plan were incalculable.

Soon after this the same thing was undertaken by a Mr. Smith an obscure, but benevolent man in Bristol, and was so highly approved, that in a few weeks a society was formed which attracted the attention, and gained the support of christians of all denominations. Within two years the society had 1,508 scholars exclusive of 276 taught in schools of dissenting congregations. Although Mr. Charles commenced the plan first in Wales, yet it was unknown at the time to Mr Smith, so that equal credit belonged to each. The generous and the noble in different parts of the kingdom followed their bright example, and now schools of this kind are to be found in almost every considerable town in the country. But the triumphs of Sabbath Schools were not to be confined to christian countries. In 1815 one was established by the Wesleyan Missionaries on the Island of Ceylon. From that time they have flourished at the different missionary stations in Asia, that vast Metropolis of Idolatry.

“Thus widely and rapidly, to the present time, has this institution multiplied its funds, its objects, and its conquests. It is scarcely possible, even to hazzard a conjecture upon the number of the children and adults, which are every Sabbath under the sound of instruction throughout the world. Perhaps, if we were to state them at considerably upwards of a MILLION, we should not at all exceed the aggregate. What a reflection for the moralist and the Christian, the patriot and the philanthropist ! What a wide and lovely scene for an enlightened and generous imagination to range over ! A million scholars, collected perhaps by fifty thousand teachers in mighty circles round the fountain of celestial truth, to cleanse from the eyes of their understanding the scales of ignorance and vice !!

“If we turn from the past to the future, our hopes leave even our success behind. Comparatively but few years shall pass before other writers shall look back from a distance in the progress of the Sunday School institution, inconceivable



to us, and sum up all that I have recorded, as but the very commencement of its operations, the first fruits of its victories, and as not worthy to extend beyond the first page of its history."

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FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL REPOSITORY.

## ADDRESS TO SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. EDITOR,

The following remarks were addressed, some time since, to the teachers of a Sabbath School, when assembled for mutual instruction and encouragement. Should you think their publication might be useful, I am allowed to say they are entirely at your service.

H.

The Christian, whose views of the character of God and of the danger of displeasing him are distinct, who has lively conceptions of the scriptural scheme of grace, and who at the same time indulges a trembling hope that his sins are forgiven, and that he may contemplate the Supreme Being in the light of a reconciled Father, is full of love and gratitude. He feels that he can never estimate aright either the divine forbearance and mercy, or his own obligation for their exercise towards himself. His sense of the divine goodness is exceedingly increased also by his correct apprehension of the evils he has escaped; and perceiving the thousands around him, who are still persisting in their perverse hostility, he longs to reclaim them, by exposing their folly, and by calling down in their behalf the omnipotent energies of the grace of God! Whenever, therefore, we *practically* consider religious instruction as of little importance to our pupils, or a preparation on their part for the retributions of eternity, as a matter of mere ordinary concern to ourselves, it must be that either we are not Christians, or that the graces of our Christian character are in a state of lamentable and alarming decay.

Under such circumstances, it may be well for us not only to examine our own hearts, and thus trace out the source of this indifference and coldness, but by a careful investigation of our object and encouragement to rekindle that benevolence of spirit, which should illumine and warm the bosom of every Christian disciple.

What then is the object to be perpetually kept in view by every Sabbath School teacher? Why does he, week after week, fleeing retirement, and breaking, as it were, the rest of the Sabbath, seat himself with his pupils, and endure alternately their thoughtlessness, stupidity or perverseness? For what purpose is this sacrifice of feeling, this self-denial, the endurance of this perhaps thankless toil? The only legitimate object must be their religious instruction—their ultimate and permanent good. You believe them exposed, while impenitent, to the anger of God; you do not hesitate, upon the veracity of revelation, to admit, that there is no way of escape for them, but by a compliance with the terms of the gospel; and without a doubt, that if the soul be lost, all is lost, and lost *for ever*, in the exercise of that love to our neighbour, which may be regarded as one test of discipleship, you engage with animation in seeking to reclaim and rescue, with the divine assistance, such as are wandering and ready to perish.

The object is a sublime one:—it is one which occupies the attention and engages the solicitude of angels:—it is undoubtedly an object which God himself, in the plenitude of his perfections, is justly represented as regarding with interest. It is one, which, if accomplished, will fill heaven with exclamations of joy.

What further encouragement, then, can we need to keep it continually in our eye and in our hearts; to labour for it with patience and vigour; to resolve, if it be not secured, that the loss shall not be charged to *our* supineness, or sluggishness, or deathlike indifference.

But consider the privileges of the Sabbath School teacher, and some further motives, which urge him to exertion.

He is engaged in a pursuit which, if it terminate successfully, will result in the possession by others of benefits incomparably rich; and during every step of his progress, if humble and prayerful, and acting with a single eye to the glory of God and the happiness of his intelligent creatures, he receives the approbation, and perhaps enjoys the presence and cheering supports of angels, and ministering spirits. But how exalted does his privilege become, when it is remembered that in the work in which he is engaged, he is a co-worker with God. Well may angels contemplate the rescue of sin-

ners, as a labour worthy of the highest admiration, when the God and Father of all is represented as *striving* with our race for their redemption to everlasting life.

How *can* we be sluggish, and having put our hand to the plough, how *dare* we look back ! The happiness of some immortal soul may be staked upon your fidelity. Who can tell, that if now unfaithful, your bosom may not at some future day burn with anguish ? Who can tell that you may not, hereafter, either in this life or the life to come, hear, with bitterness of soul, the exclamations of some one of your pupils, as bidding adieu for ever to hope and happiness, in language like this—“ *I was once a pupil in a Sabbath School : my mind then easily received impressions : my heart was tender : my habits were then forming, and oh, had my teacher been faithful to his duty, had he warned, and counselled, and reproved me as he ought, how different might have been my prospects ! how blissful that eternity, the contemplation of which now fills me with horror !*”

It has been intimated, with what correctness you will yourselves judge, that the teachers in our Sabbath School have become somewhat languid in their feelings ; that they have sometimes yielded more readily than they once did, to supposed reasons for absenting themselves from their classes : and that when they attend, they enter upon their duties feeling them to be rather *tasks* than *pleasures*.

Is this representation correct ? Is there *any* ground for making it ? Look again, we entreat you, to the value of the object in view. Remember that before the opening of another year, the destiny of some one, perhaps more, of your pupils may be sealed up to the judgment of the great day. Let not their apparent thoughtlessness discourage you. If they are stupid and regardless of religious instruction, they are more the objects of your compassion ; and if the importunity of *your* prayers, and *your* diligence in duty are to be proportioned to *their* hazard, your labours of love, instead of being diminished, ought to be redoubled. Every exhibition of unchristian temper, every symptom of indifference or hostility to religious instruction, every word and every act indicating the necessity of a change of character, is a call upon teachers to be more prayerful, more laborious, and more



fully resolved, that with the blessing of Heaven, they “will do” their pupils “good.”

Remember, too, you may be now engaged, for the last time, in the active service of your Master, as teachers in a Sabbath School. Ten thousand causes may exist to obstruct your further opportunities of usefulness in that capacity. Sickness may enfeeble your bodies : new domestic relations may call you to a distance from the scenes of earlier days : —and not improbably, ere our Sabbath School is again re-organized, some one of our members will have passed from the dreams and shadows of this life to the realities and retributions of another. Let it be our determination, then, to labour diligently in our Master’s service, while we are permitted to labour at all. It is very little that we can do : but that little let us do, *not grudgingly, but gratefully, and heartily, not as unto men, but unto God.*



## THE POWER OF CONSCIENCE.

DEAR SIR—The following brief narrative may serve to exemplify the power of conscience, even in ignorant and uninformed minds. You may rely on its accuracy, the circumstance having occurred in the house of a near relative of mine. If you approve of it and the reflections which it has suggested, they are much at your service, accompanied by the best wishes of

Yours truly,      AN OLD FRIEND.

A servant girl, about fifteen years of age, had found secret means of access to her Mistress’ store-room ; and was in the daily habit of plundering it of fruit, sugar, and other articles. The goods were missed, but no suspicions entertained against Betty ; till one day, her Mistress, on entering the room, was struck to see an old canvas portrait (which had long been placed there as lumber) strangely disfigured, by having its eyes cut out. This singular circumstance naturally occasioned inquiry as to the author of the mischief. Betty was called up and questioned ; she trembled exceedingly, and after some hesitation confessed the whole affair ; saying, ‘She could not bear the sight of the picture, for it always sta-

red her in the face, and frightened her when she went towards the heap of apples, and she had cut out its eyes to prevent this disturbance. ‘This anecdote strikingly speaks the power of conscience; it reminds one of what St. Paul says of the heathens, (Rom. ii. 15.) “Their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing, one another.” Betty was as ignorant as a heathen; she came from a dark country village, long before Sunday Schools were common. She could not even read the plain command, “Thou shalt not steal;” and if perhaps she had heard it at church, it is most likley she had no idea *whose* command it was, or that *she* was at all concerned to regard it. Still, however, her conduct proves that she was not destitute of that inward sense of right and wrong, which left her without excuse for her fault. How dreadfully guilty must those children be who go on in sin, not only against the warnings and reproaches of natural conscience, but against all the commands and threatenings of that Holy Book which they have been taught to read, and which have been frequently explained and applied to them in the most familiar and impressive manner by their pious parents, ministers, or teachers!

We may observe in all sinners a disposition to conceal their sin. Adam, the first transgressor, endeavoured to hide himself from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden, (Gen. iii. 8.) Cain, the first murderer, hoped, by burying the body of his brother, to conceal his guilt; and denied any knowledge of the affair, (Gen. iv. 8,9.) Achan, the troubler of Israel, when he had seen and coveted the Babylonish finery and treasures, “took them, and hid them in the earth, in the midst of the tent,” (Josh. vii. 21.) Gehazi, the prophet’s wicked servant, when he had obtained Naaman’s goods by one falsehood, secretly bestowed them in the house, and then went in with another falsehood to conceal the matter from his master, (2 Kings v. 24, 25.) So the sinner still waits for the twilight, saying, ‘Surely no eye shall see me;’ ‘How doth God know?’ ‘Can he Judge through the dark cloud?’ So the faithless servant steals along barefoot, and gently turns the key, or slides the drawer. So even the infant puts his hand behind him, hoping to conceal from his parent the little forbidden treasure that it grasps. But, however successful these precautions and contrivances



may be as respects our fellow creatures, they cannot quiet the guilty mind : there is still a feeling that the conduct is overlooked, and the crime detected ; hence even motionless and lifeless things are magnified by fancy into objects of terror and enmity. Many a poor creature has trembled at the creaking door, the whistling wind, the twittering bird, the rustling leaf. The feeling is true and right, but misapplied : there is a witness to all our actions ; not surely these lifeless senseless things,—they cannot see, or know or testify ; (and in this respect the wicked often flee when none pursue ; ) nor perhaps the parent, or teacher, or master, or companion, whom we have disobeyed or injured ; from these the crime may perhaps be artfully concealed. Who is it then, that is about our path and about our bed, and spieth out all our ways ? Sunday Scholars, you surely can reply,

‘ Almighty God *thy* piercing eye  
Strikes through the shades of night,  
And our most secret actions lie  
All open to *thy* sight !’

It may also be remarked, that sometimes the extraordinary care taken to conceal a guilty action, has proved the very means of bringing it to light. This was the case in the instance here related ; if Betty had not, through remorse of conscience injured the picture, she might have continued her thieving much longer undetected : many instances of this kind have been known, especially in the case of murder. Thus the sinner is often taken in his own snare, and falls into the pit which his own hands digged.

It is sad to think, that when Betty felt herself reproved for her sin, she rather tried to get rid of the monitor, than to break off the bad conduct that made its presence painful. Her conduct reminds one of that of the wicked king of Judah, mentioned in the 36th chap. of Jer. The blessed God commanded his prophet to write and publish his reproofs and threatenings with this merciful intention,—“ It may be,” said the Lord, “ that the house of Judah will hear all the evil I purpose to do unto them ; that they may return every man from his evil way ; and that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.” But instead of falling in with the gracious design of God in

this warning message, the hardened king snatched the roll out of the hand of one who was reading it aloud to him, cut it in pieces, and threw it in the fire. Foolish, as well as impious action! however he hated instruction and despised reproof, however he was determined to persist in his sin, could he hope to defeat the threatnings denounced against him; as if God knew not how to execute the sentence when the roll was destroyed in which it was written? No doubt he had some secret feeling of unbelief resembling this; beside, he wished also to prevent the contents of the roll from being circulated and read, to the exposure of his faults and the publication of his condemnation.

But how vain are all the attempts of wicked men against the reproofs of conscience and the threatnings of God: not one jot or tittle of God's word shall ever fall to the ground. The prophet was commanded to write another roll, like unto the former; and let it be observed, that there were "added many like words," more weighty and more numerous threatnings of wrath and vengeance; for to those that harden themselves against reproofs and convictions, the furnace of punishment is often heated seven times hotter.

Children, learn to regard the voice of conscience; be thankful that you have such a monitor within to remind you of the great God, concerning whom you are too apt to forget, (though it was perhaps almost the earliest lesson you learnt,) that 'though you cannot see him, yet he sees and knows you, and all things.'

Let no hope of secrecy tempt you to commit a wrong action; God and your own conscience will know it, and these will be sufficient witnesses to condemn you in that dreadful day, of which you have often heard, when the secrets of men's hearts shall be judged. Tremble at the thought of doing any thing for which conscience would reprove you; and tremble yet more lest it should become silenced and hardened. Remember, that though by going on in sin you may blind and stifle conscience, still the eye of God is upon you. There is no darkness where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves from his all-seeing eye. The darkness and the light are both alike to him.

How delightful it is to have the testimony of a good conscience! Oh! if the walls of your chamber could witness; or

the trees of the field, and the stones of the brook along which you pass in your way to your labour or your school ! would they tell of your earnest cries after mercy, your resolute striving against sin ? Well, your Father in heaven sees in secret, and will reward openly. Dear children, "if your hearts condemn you, God is greater than your heart, and knoweth all things ; but if your hearts condemn you not, then have you confidence towards God."

" Oh may these thoughts possess your breast  
Where'er you rove, whene'er you rest ;  
Nor let your weaker passions dare  
Consent to sin—for God is there."——[S. S. M.



#### EXTRACTS FROM THE LIFE OF MARY.

*Letter to Mary, accompanying a Narrative of her early Years.*

MARY, my child ! this simple memoir of your little self, has been written to sooth some of those hours of affliction which from absence, you could not know, and from your early age you could not share.

It is because I am your mother that I found any satisfaction in tracing the first ten years of your life, and at some distant period, if you should be spared, it will please and interest you, because I did it ; and it will be a curious memorial of days, and years, that were forgotten. Before it is finishd, I may have an opportunity of noting down something better worth recording than you have yet furnished me with ; but should nothing more be added, I will say thus much, that I am thankful for what you have been to me from your birth to the present hour.

Your ill health has occasioned a great deal of care and sorrow, and expense ; but the love we have for you, made us think the preservation of your life as one of our greatest earthly comforts, and I trust it will be continued as a blessing both to yourself and us. As these few lines, which will be affixed to the following account, are intended for your present reading, I would say,—show your love to us, my



dear, by trusting to our guidance ; we never refuse what you wish, but when it would be hurtful for you to have it ; and we never require what is unpleasant, but when it is necessary for your good.

Have you not an hundred times heard me say, how gladly I would bear your pains, if I could ; and take your medicine, if by that I could cure you ? And should not these, and many more, and very constant proofs that come within your own observation, convince you that I desire your welfare above all things.

Never suppose you should be happier if you had your own will in every thing. Perhaps you think we have, because we are not under the care of a father and mother ; but I can assure you, I should think it a great misfortune to be left to take our own course. It is God that gives us, as parents, sufficient wisdom and prudence to teach you ; and to him we desire to look that he would direct us in all our concerns. It is spoken of as a blessing, that “the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord ;” and it was the desire of David, that God would choose his inheritance. We think it an advantage to have friends to consult ; but sometimes they are at a distance, or are not able to advise us, and we are at a loss how to act in particular cases ; so that we are ready to say with king Jehosaphat, “we know not what to do, but our eyes are up unto thee, O God.”

As you grow older, I hope you will take delight in reading over the various parts of the Bible, which inform us how we should speak and act in every circumstance in life, and give wonderful examples of persons under great difficulty, who cried unto the Lord in their distresses, and he delivered them ; and if your mind is rightly impressed, you will be induced by these instances to call upon Him for yourself, that he would bless and guide you. He invites young people to come unto Him in these words, “Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth ?” and has said, “I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me.”

You have read histories of children who, at your age, have been taught of God to love and serve him ; and who have died rejoicing in the prospect of going to heaven and living there without sin.

I know that you will meet with similar or better advice than this in some of the excellent books that abound in the present day, to which you have the opportunity of referring, besides those in your own collection ; but I persuade myself you will take more interest in what was written expressly for you by her who feels your welfare as dear to her as her own, and who is indeed

Your affectionate mother,

M. E.

*Extracts from the life of Mary,*

By her mother.

My dear and only child M. F.E. was born December 23, 1795. The pleasure I had fondly anticipated from this delightful tie, was alloyed by early indications of a delicate constitution. For several days, in March, life was so nearly gone, that more than once it was thought to be wholly extinguished. Then the immortality of the soul appeared of infinite importance, and full of consolation. I doubted not but my babe would be a glorified spirit in heaven ; and this made rich amends for all it cost to bear her, and best enabled me to resign her. By the kindness of Providence we were spared the parting trial then. Our dying child revived, and was gradually restored to her usual state of health. In January, 1798, Mary was seized with a scarlet fever, which proved violent and dangerous, but she was mercifully raised up again.

About this period it became necessary to use firmness in cultivating habits of obedience. If one who possessed a more than common share of mildness in her temper, discovered so much self-will as called for suitable endeavours to restrain it, I may well be persuaded the evil is universal, and that in few cases the task of subduing it can be less difficult than to me, who had so little to oppose.

In February, 1800, Mary was attacked with a disorder in her eyes. While yet suffering from this affliction, she was seized with the measles. This I feared with her weak frame would have proved fatal ; instead of which, she was brought through it beyond expectation.

About the middle of July, 1802, Mary's eyes became again affected, and it was at length feared that she would lose her

sight entirely. Sea bathing was prescribed, but not with sanguine hopes of success ; as in some such cases it had been hurtful, but the probability was sufficiently in her favour to justify the attempt. Thus with many an anxious fear and trembling hope, her papa, aunt J. and myself, went with her to Weymouth. In the first fortnight, there was scarcely any visible difference ; but after that time, a merciful alteration took place, and I received the congratulations of several who had often observed the little sufferer. Among others who kindly noticed her, under this affliction, was Lady Elgin, who stepped towards us one morning on the esplanade, with the Princess Charlotte in her hand, to make some inquiries about her ; after replying to this obliging attention, I said that Mary, who was just a fortnight older than the Princess, had been very desirous of seeing her, but could not look up. When Lady E. with a condescension that did honour to her feelings, asked her Royal Highness to stoop down that she might be gratified. This was an interesting circumstance to be long and gratefully remembered by us.

Early in the year 1803, Mary's eyes which had never wholly recovered from the last attack, seemed to require our again having recourse to the sea, and we were strongly advised to place her under the care of the Miss Ts., who boarded and instructed a few children, chiefly invalids. As the spring came on in the following year, Mary's languor and debility returned, and as her aunt J. was at Weymouth, we were induced to let her try the sea again. Sister J. returned with her young charge on the 4th of September.

Nov. 22, I went to Lechlade ; Mr. E came from London that way, to spend Christmas there with me ; but was seized with a severe illness, and we returned home with difficulty, Dec. 25, leaving Mary behind ; this affliction prevented our bringing her with us, and she remained there till the next summer. It was the employment of some retired hours during this long absence to write out all particulars I could remember and collect of her past life.

The preceding memoirs brought to a close in 1805, lay by till January, 1812, when I have copied it out afresh, to correspond in appearance with a second part in which some particulars of the remaining five years of my beloved child's



life are recorded for my own sad solace, now that death has for ever deprived me of this treasure ;—and yet I trust I may say'

'I've not to earth resign'd her ;—but to God.'

[S. S. M.]

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## NEW-YORK SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

In our first number we commenced, for the benefit of our youthful readers, a succinct history of Sabbath Schools from their origin. We will now lay before them a more extended view of them as existing in the city of New-York, the Corresponding Secretary of the Sunday School Union in that city having furnished us with the Reports of that Society for the two last years.

Some of the inhabitants of that city, were among the earliest supporters of these benevolent institutions on this side the Atlantic ;—institutions which now have advocates and patrons throughout our widely extended country. Benevolent females of the several denominations in New-York, assembled by public invitation on the 24th of Jan. 1816 ; and on the 31st of the same month a constitution was adopted, officers appointed, and every preparation made for the immediate opening of schools for the instruction of females. On the 12th of February in the same year, the gentlemen of the city consulted respecting the establishment of schools for male children, and the NEW-YORK SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION SOCIETY was formed on the 26th of the same month and schools immediately opened.

Upon these schools, thus established, the blessing of Heaven has evidently rested, their numbers and usefulness increased through each succeeding year. From the fifth annual report for the year ending May 1821, we learn, that the number of Schools under the patronage of the New-York Sunday School Union was 38, and the number of pupils 3,800 ; many of whom have been regular attendants for five years, the period during which the school had existed.

The sixth report for the year ending May 1822, presents us with a still further increase ; the number of schools under the patronage of the Society being 42, and the number of scholars 4,055. At the same date, the number of superin-

tendents, teachers, and visiters engaged in conducting the schools was 540; the whole number of those who had been engaged from the commencement of the schools was 1,800, and the whole number of scholars whose names had been entered on the Registers of the Society was 20,026.

Those at all acquainted with the business of instruction must be aware, that self-denial, perseverance and zeal, must characterize the teachers of so many schools—of schools too, many of which have now been conducted for more than six years, and with signal success. The committee of the Society, by whom the Report is published, pay a well deserved tribute of applause to those who have thus devoted a part of their time to the instruction of the rising generation;—to the *religious* instruction of those, many of whom, but for these benevolent persons, would probably have lived in ignorance and died in sin.

The schools have been the source of incalculable good to those who teach, as well as to those who are taught. More than six hundred, teachers and scholars, have experienced the power of divine truth upon their hearts, and made a public profession of their faith in Christ. Children have died rejoicing in hope, expressing gratitude to their teachers in the Sunday School, praising God that they were permitted to attend them, and repeating just before uniting in the hosannas of the upper world, some of those songs of Zion which they first learned to rehearse in these institutions. How amazing the difference between the condition of these youthful victims of death in the world beyond the grave, to what it would have been, had no Christian established, and no kind hand, conducted them to the Sunday School.

The means by which these schools have become so useful, and by which they have been made to bear no indistinct resemblance to the sanctuaries of God, are surely worthy our consideration. While learning to read, they read religious books. The Bible, that only pure fountain of knowledge, is found in every Sunday School. Hymns and psalms and catechisms are allowed the place they deserve. Bibles, Testaments, &c. are given as premiums. Prayer is offered to that Being who is more ready to give the Holy spirit to them that ask him than parents are to give good gifts to their

children. That blessings have been received, we know ;—their number and extent, eternity will disclose.

We would mention also as worthy of imitation, the establishment of libraries in some, we know not but all of these schools. The families to which the children belong are also visited, and conversed with. Parents and children, with the teachers, thus form a community, united by bonds of affection, and engaged in the promotion of a common object,—growth in knowledge and in grace. We witness, too, with pleasure, the affectionate remembrance cherished by the pupils towards their teachers, after a separation of months, and perhaps years—a remembrance which will probably remain with them through life.

Prayer meetings of the teachers are held, and there is reason to believe that “a blessing has attended them.”

After having made these preliminary observations, we will make some extracts from the report, which will illustrate and confirm the statements we have given.

“A lad 12 years of age, of open disposition, but strong passions, attended Sunday School occasionally for 4 years, but was inattentive and of bad habits. Previous to last May, he came only when brought in the morning, and absented himself both from home and school till night, though always severely chastised for it by his father. He was also an habitual truant from week-day school. Neither persuasion nor severity could enforce his attendance at either. All means, in the hands of his parents, failed of reclaiming him : he grew rather worse, and the few times he attended with us, he was so insubordinate that it was frequently urged by the teachers that he should be expelled. He however remained, and attended the last anniversary, but was dismissed from the assemblage for *misconduct* : from which time he attended no more till the first week in June last, when the visiter advised with the parents, and recommended an entire change of treatment, which was directly followed. The rod was entirely discarded. The boy was detained at home for an interview with the visiter, who, in the presence of his parents, exposed to him his wicked and ungrateful conduct. Contrary to our anticipations, a silent attention was obtained, and so much influence was gained over him, that he not only with tears confessed his transgressions, but promised, the



ensuing week, to set out with new resolutions. He did accordingly attend the next Sabbath. The superintendent had determined to reverse the order of things also at school, and no longer reported his absence, but his attendance, and always with a word of recommendation to his parents of his improving conduct. His ambition was excited sufficiently to bring him under the *full influence* of good precept and example. We frequently reminded him to attend *early*, as we might want his services with the younger classes; and to these he was sometimes called. This course of treatment continued for three months, when we thought it safe to let him fall in with the usual routine of the school, which was done without losing any ground we had gained: His punctual attendance is marked on our rolls every Sabbath but one since last June. He has also, in all that time, never failed to obtain all the usual monthly rewards, even the prizes for proofs; and before this time he was never known to commit a *single verse* to memory. In a late visit to his family, it was ascertained that he had been equally attentive at his daily school, and his father has not had occasion to correct him for six months past.

“Thus was reclaimed from vicious habits, and bad company, a boy who, had he continued to receive the same treatment a few months longer, in all probability never would have been reformed. He now may rise to reputation and usefulness in society.

“Five other instances of this nature might be stated, which were equally happy in their results.”

As this sheet may probably fall into the hands of some who should be active supporters of Sabbath Schools, as well as of the dear youth for whom it was more particularly designed, we cannot forbear recommending, with the Committee, “the plan of visitation called the local system, which has been practised in a few instances with the happiest effects. According to this plan, each school will be gathered from a certain district or locality, within the limits of which the exertions of the visitors and teachers will be confined. The conductors of the school will endeavour to occupy this district as completely as possible; to visit regularly, and as often as may be, all the families in which there are proper subjects of Sunday School instruction; to draw the child-

ren into the school, and induce the parents to attend public worship ; to have occasional meetings of the parents with the children, and employ every hopeful means of promoting their social and religious welfare. An industrious and persevering cultivation, in this way, of a defined locality, has been proved, both here and abroad, to be productive of more certain and permanent good effects, than any other method of exertion. The objects of attention are soon familiarly known ; the changes which take place are easily noted ; the extent of the task to be performed is definite, and the progress made in it is perceptible. The acquaintance thus formed by frequent visits, and a constant attention to the same individuals, soon excites a deep interest in the parents and children, as well as in the visitors and teachers."

"The following, extracted from the report of one of the schools, is given as a sample of what may be accomplished by this kind of visiting. This school consists of 241 boys, belonging to 169 families. On special occasions, 230, and on an average, 180 of the learners have been present in school. All the families have been statedly visited five times in the course of the year."

"It has given us great pleasure, in our visits, to observe the progress of improvement, and the favourable change of circumstances in many families. Some, whom we now class as reputable, were far otherwise a year ago ; and some who then were but nominally Christians, we now regard as Christians in deed and in truth. Many grateful expressions are rendered us, by those from whom we have been for some time separated, for our instructions which were long since bestowed, bearing so strong a testimony to the usefulness of Sunday Schools, that we cannot forbear adding the following extracts. A boy ten years of age writes thus : ' Does our very dear friend think we have forgotten him who has been so kind to us ? We are happy that you have not forgotten us, and continue to pray for us, although we are absent ; but there is no kind Sunday School teacher here to advise and pray for wicked boys on the Sabbath day. We intend to learn in the Testament. I almost forgot to tell you that I am restored to health. This from your affectionate G. W.' Another boy writes as follows : ' Many thanks for your goodness. My father and mother thank you, and

my sister also. We go to Sunday School and Church regularly. Dear sir, your good instruction and advice, I hope, by the blessing of God, I never shall forget, for we are often talking about you, and humbly thank you for it.' One parent writes, 'Our boys are greatly affected at hearing from you; they talk of you, and want to see you much; and I desire to see you as one of my best friends.' Another, who is in ill health, says, "You are not forgotten among us. O sir, could I tell you how often I thought about you in my illness, and wanted to see you! I humbly thank you for the good instruction and care of my children while under your protection. May God reward and bless you.'"

There are other schools in the city, noticed by the committee, among which the "Female Union Society for the promotion of Sabbath Schools," mentioned in our preliminary remarks, has an eminent standing. This Society numbers 34 schools, and 2,500 scholars attending regularly on an average.

To the Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Society are attached 13 schools, and number 200 scholars.

"Besides these, there are several others not connected with any Society or Union. The whole number of children and adults attending Sunday Schools more or less regularly, is estimated at 9,000."

"This admirable system of instruction has, in the course of the last year, been very much extended in all parts of the United States; and as it is every where emphatically a system of biblical instruction, its good effects are co-extensive with its operation. Sunday Schools are no longer deemed to be adapted only to the most illiterate and rude. Their moral and religious tendencies are found to be equally well suited to one description of children as another."

It is a subject of regret, that by the prevalence of the yellow fever, during the last summer, many of the schools were interrupted, all of which have not as yet been re-established. We trust, however, that the prosperity of the New-York Sunday School Union, so far from being ultimately diminished, will continue to increase, and that there, and elsewhere, Sabbath Schools will be vigorosly maintained and the youth instructed in such a manner, as that when the fathers fail by reason of death, there will still remain a generation to the praise of God.



## SABBATH SCHOOL ANECDOTES.

Two boys were apprenticed in a pious family, and both were attentive at the Sunday School, the eldest 14 years of age, has established a complete guardianship over the younger, 12 years old ; not long since he was overheard reproving the other for not praying when they went to bed, and after near half an hour's persuasion got him on his knees ; he would not pray aloud ; " now," says the eldest, " what do you think of when you pray : let me hear." " About my God," replies the other. " But you ought to think of your sins," said the eldest.

A boy, nine years old, one day very abruptly remarked to his father, " Kings are very wicked, but there is one King who is very good, and he is King of all the earth, and will judge all kings, and *we* shall see him father, for he will judge *us too*, for every eye must see him, and we must all appear before the judgment seat of Cbrist." These thoughts, the father observed, he must have learnt at the Sunday School.

Two lads, 10 and 12 years of age, were overheard talking as they passed along the street, about swearing ; and referring to a former occasion, when they were reprov'd at the Sunday School, one asked the other, " have you sworn since ?" " No," replied the other. " Nor I either," rejoined he, " nor will I again."

Two lads made a visit to a school after having been absent more than a year, and approached the superintendent, when the elder said we are happy in the privilege once more to come and see you and this school, which looks as delightful as ever.

Two boys who had been absent from the city three or four months, on re-entering the school, while the superintendent was addressing the children, were so affected that both burst into tears as they went to their accustomed seats, and when he had closed, they hastened to seize him by the hand, and pour forth the joyful feelings of a grateful heart, as when

a child returns after a long absence to the bosom of parental affection.

A boy who had a long time absented himself from the Sunday School was almost given up as hopeless. One day, in company with a gang of young depredators in Coffee-house Slip, while in the act of stealing coffee out of a bag by the handful, and handing it to his comrade, who was stationed just by, behind another boy, caught the eye of his teacher; he started, gave the signal, and the other followed with what plunder they had got. The teacher embraced the opportunity, and called on him in the evening, and found him trembling, in expectation of being accused before his parents for his acts of thievery; but seeing he needed no accuser, he made no allusion to the subject, but reasoned with him on the loss he might sustain by his absence from school. The boy ingenuously acknowledged his error, and promised to attend the next Sabbath, which he did, and has continued from that time (which was 6 or 8 months ago) as attentive as any one in the school.

A teacher happened to call at the home of a lad who was habitually truant and disobedient to his widowed mother, just as he was about to join his comrades in some enticing enterprise: as he entered, his sister entreated him to stop the boy, who she said had been left by the mother to assist her in some work which could not go on without his aid. After a short but affectionate reproof the teacher left him, somewhat affected, but too stubborn to promise not to go away. On a subsequent visit, the teacher was told that the boy had from that time behaved uncommonly well, was industrious, and refused to go out with his companions.

A teacher asking for a boy one morning, the mother answered, "Oh, I have sent him to school (one of the free schools.) After your advice the other day, Stephen and I felt ashamed, and I told him, poor as I was, I would keep him from school no more to gather chips, but he should go to school every day." She is indeed poor, and the labour of the boy in gathering chips was equal to a load of wood a month, yet this, which seemed so necessary to their support, she could readily forego for the good of the child. This is

but one of many similar instances where parents have freely relinquished present good, to put their children in the way of receiving good instruction, and remove them from the influence of bad morals.

A lad who had been placed at a porter house, and whose wages, *a dollar a week*, was of no small account to his needy parents, was taken away and restored to the Sunday School, on being reminded by the teacher of the evil that such a situation might be to the boy, by the corruption of his morals.

A teacher observes, that on visiting a family he was delighted to find the mother surrounded with a school of little girls. This woman had sometime before stated to him, that owing to the neglect of an intemperate husband, their means of support was so uncertain that she could not pay for schooling her two little girls, and she scrupled to send them to the free school, when he advised her to take the course she had now adopted, and which will enable her to educate her little ones, and afford them a partial support.

The widowed mother of a family, long separated from the school, and now in New-Jersey, writes—"I know not how soon I may be called from my dear children ; but should it be so, I entreat your affectionate instructions and advice to them, though distant from you."



## POETRY.

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.—BY W. B. TAPPAN.

I saw the outcast—an abandoned boy,  
Whom wretchedness, debased, might call its own ;  
His look was wan, and his sad sunken eye,  
Mute pleader, told a bosom-harrowing tale ;  
For he was one, unknown to fostering care,  
Which should have shielded and protected him  
In childhood's dangerous hour. No father's prayer,  
In midnight orison, had risen ever,  
Before the viewless throne, to fall again  
In blessings on the lad. No mother's tear



Had dropt in secret for the wanderer. He,  
 Dejected, stood before me, and methought  
 Resembled much a flower, a ruined flower,  
 But lovely once, and might have burgeon'd gaily,  
 Had not adversity's dread simoom pass'd,  
 And blighted all its sweets. The buds of hope  
 Bloom'd on; but not for him. The morning sun  
 Shone gladly out; but all to him was dark.  
 His soul was in eclipse, the energies  
 Of mind lay dormant, withering in their prime.  
 I look'd, but he had pass'd me; he stole on  
 Despondingly, irresolute his pace,  
 As on forbidden ground. The world seem'd not  
 For him; haply its frigid boon were much,  
 To yield the sufferer, misery's sheltering grave.

I saw the outcast; but to fancy's view  
 Methought a vision, fair and bright, appeared.  
 So chang'd, I mus'd; but the intelligence  
 Darting in lustre from his mild full eye,  
 Assur'd my throbbing heart, 'twas he indeed.  
 Gone was the sallow hue, the sombre cast  
 Of wretchedness, and in its stead, the glow  
 Of cheerfulness shone out. His parting lip  
 Disclos'd the smile, content delights to wear,  
 When peace within sits revelling. His step erect,  
 Told of a heart at peace. He walk'd in the beauty  
 Of reckless boyhood. Wondering, then, I ask'd  
 The cause. He pointed meekly to a dome  
 Whose hallowed portals tell the passenger  
 That the ETERNAL deigns to call it his  
 Known of all nations as the house of prayer.  
 Here, said the youth, while glistening drops bedew'd  
 His beauteous cheek, here pity led my way;  
 And he that knew no father soon found one  
 Able and sure to save. And he, whose tears  
 No mother's hand had kindly wip'd away,  
 Found one who said, "Come thou forsaken, come  
 Into my bosom—Rest, poor wanderer. here!"  
 He ceased—My full heart, as I went my way,  
 Call'd down God's benison on the Sunday School.

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